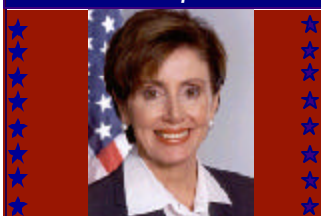


U.S. House of Representatives



Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi

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The Pelosi Report

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ISSUE 8
FEBRUARY 2004

Dear Friends:

During Black History Month, we celebrate the contributions of African Americans and remember not just our heroes such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Frederick Douglass, but also the extraordinary lives of ordinary people who helped build our great nation.

African Americans continue to contribute to our nation and to make enormous strides, despite having to overcome unspeakable hardship and indefensible prejudice throughout history. With the indomitable spirit of Dr. Dorothy Height, president emeritus of the National Council of Negro Women, and new leaders such as Marc Morial at the National Urban League, African Americans are making progress. More African American families have joined the middle class and the number of black businesses is increasing.

In spite of this progress, we have a long way to go. This year, we will commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the landmark civil rights case *Brown v. Board of Education* that declared what we all knew to be true: "In the field of public education the doctrine of separate but equal has no place." Yet today, 50 years later, many poor and minority children are concentrated in schools that fail to meet their needs.

President Bush and the Republicans have promised, with great fanfare, to 'Leave No Child Behind.' But when it comes to keeping those promises, they take a recess from responsibility and leave millions of children behind. The funding bill the Republicans passed this year falls a staggering \$8 billion below what was promised in the No Child Left Behind bill, and it only funds a small portion of what was promised for Title I, the program that helps at-risk students master the basics. As happens all too often, black and minority children will feel the impact most strongly.

That is simply not acceptable. As the Supreme Court knew in 1954, every child deserves the best education this great country can provide.

As we celebrate Black History Month, let us also recommit ourselves to building a better future, beginning with the best education for all our children.

Sincerely,

Nancy Pelosi

Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Leader

Revisiting the Road to Brown:

Education Equality in the 21st Century



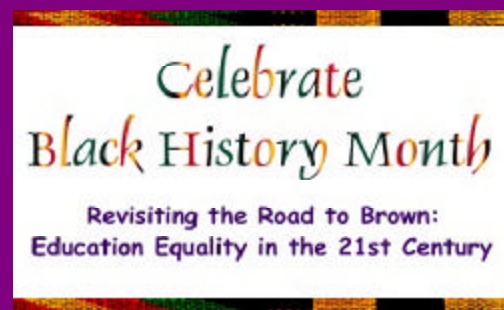
It's been 50 years since schools in America were desegregated. Fifty years since the highest court in our nation declared what we all knew was true, "in the field of public education the doctrine of separate but equal has no place." We knew then, just as we know now that every child deserves the best education this great country can provide.

Sadly, as we look ahead to May 17th, the 50th anniversary of that monumental decision, we must reckon with the truth that many of our children are still subjected to a substandard education. They're being taught in dilapidated classrooms, with old materials and few resources.

Democrats want to fulfill and strengthen the promise of *Brown* -the promise that all public schools should provide the best education possible to their students. Democrats are working to raise student achievement in core subjects like reading and math, to require accountability and responsibility from our schools, to provide after-school programs and expand early childhood education programs like Head Start. And, we're fighting to make higher education more affordable and accessible for all young people who want to go on to college.

As we celebrate and honor the many contributions and achievements of African Americans during Black History Month, let us remember Linda Brown and the countless brave African Americans who helped open up the classrooms of American schools and the hearts of the American people.

- Leader Nancy Pelosi



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African Americans Hit Hard by Bush Budget

"The Bush budget proposal is bad news for the country's middle class and even more is a document of doom for African Americans."

- Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH)

This month, President Bush proposed a budget to Congress that dramatically hurts African American families. The African American community faces significant challenges including an unemployment rate among African Americans that has risen dramatically to 10.5 percent since the start of the Bush Administration. Millions of African Americans are uninsured or barely able to afford health insurance premiums.

Instead of addressing the challenges faced by African Americans, the Bush Budget raises new barriers to success and opportunity by:

- Closing the door on a college education and eliminating funding for dropout prevention programs;
- Cutting funding for the Small Business Administration, which helps minority-owned small businesses grow;
- Providing only half of the funding promised for after-school services and eliminating the comprehensive educational, health, and nutrition services that children in Head Start currently receive; and
- Failing to make healthcare affordable for middle-class families, undermining Medicaid, and cutting funding for the Office of Minority Health

Democrats have different priorities. Democrats are committed to securing the prosperity of African Americans by working to ensure that all Americans have the same opportunities and access to a high-quality education, affordable health care, and good jobs.

FAIRNESS: The Civil Rights Act of 2004



Leader Pelosi released the following statement on a civil rights bill introduced by senior Democrats on February 11. The bill is called FAIRNESS: The Civil Rights Act of 2004.

I am proud to join my Democratic colleagues, John Lewis (D-GA), John Conyers (D-MI), Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), and George Miller (D-CA), as an original cosponsor of the FAIRNESS Act to restore the promise of opportunity and equality for all.

Years of struggle and the efforts of millions of Americans made civil rights protections a reality and brought our country closer to achieving our ideals of equality and opportunity for all. Yet as we prepare to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 50th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, we must recognize that recent court cases have undercut civil rights protections in unacceptable ways.

Our courts have a responsibility to protect Americans from discrimination and to ensure fair treatment of workers. But rather than being the guardians of our basic civil rights and labor laws, ideological court rulings have quietly but effectively dismantled these rights.

The FAIRNESS Act would restore many years of settled law and reassert the authority of Congress to remedy discrimination and ensure fair treatment of workers. It would overturn court decisions that hold employers harmless for unfair labor practices committed against undocumented workers. It would provide the same remedies to victims of intentional gender, disability, and religious discrimination as those afforded to victims of intentional race discrimination. And it would enhance protections for older workers and strengthen enforcement of the Equal Pay Act.

We must pass this bill to send a clear message that Americans do not want to dismantle the civil rights and labor laws that so many have fought so hard to achieve.

AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY - KEY FACTS

- ✱ **38.3 million** - The estimated number of U.S. residents who were black or black in combination with one or more other races. This race group then made up 13.3 percent of the total population.
- ✱ **17 percent**- Among blacks age 25 and over, the proportion that had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2002, up a full percentage point from the previous year.
- ✱ **2.6 million**-Number of black military veterans in the United States in 2000.
- ✱ **\$29,177**-The annual median income in 2002 of households with householders who reported only black or black in combination with one or more other races.
- ✱ **8.8 million** -Number of black families. Of these, nearly one-half (48 percent) are married-couple families.
- ✱ **48 percent**- The proportion of black householders who own their own home.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau